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REVIEWS AND NOTES.

Graphic Methods of Presenting Facts. By Willard C. Brinton. New York: The Engineering Magazine Co., 1914. 371 pp.

In this work by Mr. Brinton we have for the first time a volume devoted entirely to the discussion of graphic representation. The volume was evidently intended more for the uses of the executives of large business concerns who wish to know at a moment's notice the trend of business or costs than for the student of statistical methods.

The author evidently believes that every chart should tell its story entirely unaccompanied by analysis or text, giving the figures from which the chart was constructed. Wherever a chart alone is used for purposes of display in an exhibition it is but natural that the figures must be found on the chart if at all. Where a chart is used, however, upon one page of a book and upon the adjoining page is given the statistics from which the chart is drawn, it is not necessary that the actual figures should, in every case, be found upon the chart. In such cases the chart is used rather to bring out striking changes, or to aid one who is simply interested in the general movement, aside from the actual figures which serve as a basis for the chart. There are over 250 diagrams represented in the volume and the criticism attached to many of them by the author is that the actual figures should have been given on the chart. If the figures along the base line refer to years and upon the vertical axis refer to quantities and a simple dynamic chart is constructed, it is usual to allow the reader to form a close approximation of the magnitude of the variable at each year by referring to the scale at the left of the chart without including also the actual figures at the top of the chart. Where no text is used this method of including the figures in the chart may be advisable, but in the average work dealing with statistics the figures are given in a column for those students who desire them and then the general trend of the figures is shown on the chart. In cases where the statistical tables are included this would seem to be sufficient.

In Figure 144 the author takes decided exception to the method of chart used by the United States Census Bureau in distributing the population by sex, age, and marital condition. He constructs in Figure 145 the chart which he considers to be preferable. It is doubtless true that Chart 144 is exaggerated in that the same space is given to five years as to ten or fifteen years but with this correction it is doubtful whether the form suggested by the author is preferable to that used by the Bureau of the Census.

The chapter devoted to maps and pins is, perhaps, as satisfactory as any in the volume in that it gives various methods for overcoming difficulties which have confronted one who has ever tried to use this method of presenting frequency. The fifty pages of the book devoted to the presentation of charts for the use of the executive of a large corporation should prove of great value to the statisticians of these companies.

One of the best features of the book is the introduction of charts covering a vast range of subjects and the detailed criticism of these charts. In many cases charts have been drawn to show the way in which the material might have been presented in a more satisfactory manner. The page is large but this is necessary in order that the charts may not be too much reduced in reproduction. It was, perhaps, necessary that the paper should be of the quality used in this book but it is unfortunate that the result has been to make the book so heavy that it is not easy to hold for continuous reading.

It seems to be the intention of the author that many of the rules given for graphic representation should be adopted as standards. Most of them might well be adopted, but to a few of them some objection might be made. The warnings to inexperienced workers in this field deserve careful attention. Considered as a whole the author has done a satisfactory piece of work and one for which statisticians will be grateful. The book deserves reading by any one who is intending to use graphic representation, and if the rules given by the author were followed the principal mistakes which are so often made would be avoided.

WM. B. BAILEY.

The Construction of Mortality and Sickness Tables. A primer by W. Palin Elderton and Richard C. Fippard. London: Adam and Charles New York: The Macmillan Co. 120 pp. Eighty cents.

This little book is intended to serve the same purpose in its field as "The Primer of Statistics" published by W. Palin Elderton and Ethel M. Elderton. It gives in language which can be understood by the average student the different methods of computing mortality and sickness tables. In a very few cases the algebraic formulæ are given in a footnote. The methods of computing tables both from the material collected from the experience of insurance companies and also from censuses and death records are given. In the concluding chapter the rates are included from the early Northampton table down to those which show present experience. The volume should be valuable as a first book for those who are intending to become actuaries as well as for the general students of statistics who wish to become acquainted with the process involved in the construction of mortality tables.

W. B. B.